

cityscene

The city is receiving American Rescue Plan Act funding.
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DECEMBER 2021



Students Learn to Communicate with Their Hands

American Sign Language is blossoming at Fairfax Academy. Since its introduction in 2020, ASL has “blown up,” said Cassandra Nesbitt, the academy’s ASL teacher. About 240 students have filled all eight sections of the ASL classes.

Students enroll in ASL for a myriad of reasons. Some want to communicate more fully with friends and family members who are deaf or experiencing hearing loss. Working students may interact with the deaf culture as part of their jobs. Some students with dyslexia or intellectual disabilities use ASL to help communicate and learn. Still others want to provide interpretive services, work in deaf communities, or both.

In Nesbitt’s classes, students work in small groups. After about 10 minutes of verbal and signed instruction, Nesbitt breaks students into groups of five, each group diverse and well-paired as they work through their lessons.

She requires students to “have a conversation with each person in the class,” she noted. “I tell them, ‘I want you to be comfortable enough with the language so when you encounter that person, you can actually use it.’”



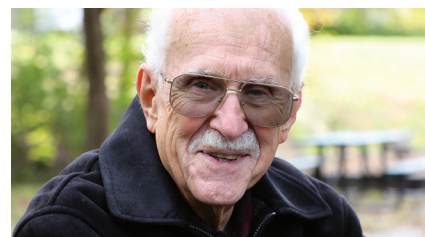
American Sign Language instructor
Cassandra Nesbitt

ASL is a culture as well as a language. ASL users typically finger-spell their spoken English names unless they have their own unique ASL “name sign,” usually devised by someone in the Deaf community.

“There are regional differences in sign language,” Nesbitt observed. “In New York, people sign faster, and in Georgia, people sign slower.” (Nesbitt received her master’s degree in deaf education in New York City, then taught for eight years at a school for the deaf in Atlanta.) Not all signs are identical, she noted, but some are “iconic. A lot of signs look like actions. Some concepts are easy for people to understand.”

One of Nesbitt’s goals is to provide
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Dale Lestina to Receive Fairfax Award

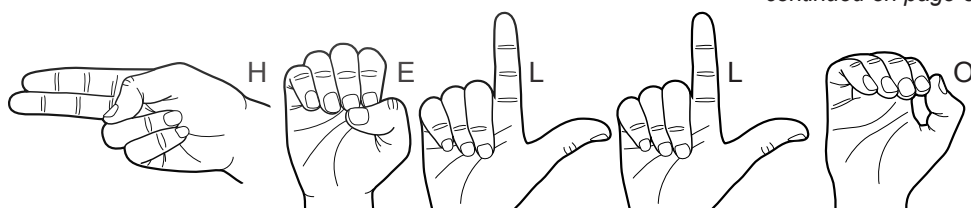


Mayor David Meyer will present longtime Mosby Woods resident Dale Lestina with the Fairfax Award at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 5, in the City Hall Council Chambers. This prestigious award honors outstanding achievement in public service. Reception to follow.

Among his many contributions to the city, Lestina, 85, served on the city’s Economic Development Authority for 17 years, including as chair for 12 years; chaired the Fairfax 2020 Commission in the early 1990s; served as president of the Mosby Woods Community Association; and chaired the I-66 Citizens Coalition, which fought for the construction of sound walls to reduce traffic noise for Mosby Woods residents. Lestina serves as the president of the Fairfax Renaissance Housing Corporation.

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CITY NEWS

Holiday Closure and Service Information

Thursday, Dec. 23 (Christmas Eve observed)

- Closed at noon: City government offices
- Closed: DMV Select, General District Court, Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: regular schedule

Friday, Dec. 24 (Christmas observed)

- Closed: city government offices, DMV Select, General District Court, Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: regular schedule until service ends at 7 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 25 (Christmas)

- Closed: Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: no service

Friday, Dec. 31

- Closed: city government offices, DMV Select, General District Court, Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: regular service

Saturday, Jan. 1, 2022

- Closed: Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: no service

Holiday Refuse & Recycling Collection Schedule

- Dec. 23: Thursday and Friday routes collected
- Dec. 24: no service
- Dec. 30: Thursday and Friday routes collected
- Dec. 31: no service

Please note: there may be a delay in yard debris collection citywide the week of the holiday. Please leave items at the curb until they are collected. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "Refuse Holiday"), 703-385-7837



FESTIVAL of LIGHTS & CAROLS

DECEMBER 4 • 12PM-6PM
OLD TOWN SQUARE, 10415 NORTH ST

COME LISTEN TO LIVE HOLIDAY MUSIC, CRAFTS AND ENJOY S'MORES AND HOT CIDER AT OLD TOWN SQUARE!
 THE TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY WILL TAKE PLACE AT 5:30PM

FULL EVENT SCHEDULE:
FAIRFAXVA.GOV/SPECIALEVENTS



FAIR CITY MALL

QUESTIONS?
 703-385-7858
PARKSREC@FAIRFAXVA.GOV

Don't Bag It! Curbside Leaf Collection Provided Through Dec. 30

Residents who receive curbside refuse/recycling service from the city may rake their leaves loose to the curb for collection.

Please rake loose leaves to the curb no later than Dec. 23 for collection. Bagged leaves are not collected until January 2022.

Real Estate Tax Bills Due Dec. 6

City of Fairfax real estate tax bills are due Monday, Dec 6. A late fee is assessed for payments received after the due date, plus interest (if applicable). If you pay real estate taxes directly and have not received a tax bill, call 703-385-7900. If you receive a real estate tax bill but your

mortgage company escrows the payment, please immediately forward the bill to your mortgage company.

Real Estate Taxes: Payment Options, Loans Available

Pay real estate taxes online: on fairfaxva.gov, under *How Do I...* click on "Pay Tax & Bills." Providers may charge a convenience fee. You also may mail your payment, or drop off your payment in the secure drop box on the circular driveway at City Hall.

The Taxpayer Assistance Program (TAP) offers interest-free loans to pay real estate taxes. Apply in-person to borrow \$250 - \$15,000, and repay monthly for six to 10 months. There is a 5% application fee. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "TAP"), 703-385-7900

COUNCIL REPORTER

PLEASE NOTE: summaries have been edited. To read the full Council Reporter, visit fairfaxva.gov and click on “City Meetings.”

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF OCTOBER 12, 2021

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously, the adoption of the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously: Consideration of a budget increase to the City of Fairfax’s Human Services FY22 budget linked to the City-County General Service Agreement; and Consideration for authorization of a Memorandum of Understanding with Fairfax County for shared printing services.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Approved, unanimously, to enact an ordinance amending previously enacted Ordinance No. 2020-18, pertaining to the vacation of a portion of the city’s Orchard Street public right-of-way.
- Approved, unanimously, an appropriation resolution in the amount of \$56,576 to fund the FY22 office lease cost associated with the relocation of the city’s Economic Development Office.

ITEMS NOT REQUIRING A PUBLIC HEARING

- Approved, unanimously, a deed of lease with Willow-Wood Office Owner LLC, for the lease of certain office space located at 10300 Eaton Place in the city, and further authorized the city manager, or the city manager’s designee, to finalize and execute the deed of lease, provided that the final form of deed of lease is approved as to form by the city attorney.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approved, unanimously the minutes for the Sept. 14, 2021 regular meeting; the Sept. 28, 2021, regular meeting; and the Sept. 28 special meeting.

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF OCTOBER 26, 2021

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously, the adoption of the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously: Consideration of the revised *City of Fairfax and Fairfax City School Board Agreement for Use of City Schools* (after discussion); Consideration of a resolution approving the city’s participation in the proposed settlement of opioid-related claims against various named entities, and authorizing and directing the execution of any documentation necessary to effectuate the city’s participation in the settlements; and Introduction of a supplemental appropriation resolution in the amount of \$3,950,391 (\$2.8M General Fund impact, \$1M transfer to Capital Fund) to fund FY22 first quarter non-discretionary expenditures, unbudgeted initiatives, capital program cost escalation, and FY22 unfunded priorities.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- Approved, unanimously, to reappoint Teresa Presson to the Commission for Women; Simmy King to the Commission for Women; and Deborah Difalco to the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Citizens Advisory Board.
- Approved, unanimously, to appoint Yolanda Oritz to the Commission on the Arts; Susan Morris to the Commission on the Arts; and Brian Howell to the Commission on the Arts.

ACTIONS AFTER CLOSED MEETING

- Approved, unanimously, to amend the agenda to add two additional items that arose from the closed meeting discussion: Introduction of an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 30 (Elections), to add provisions pertaining to the timing of elections for the Mayor, City Council members, and School Board members; Consideration of scheduling a public hearing on a proposed resolution requesting that the General Assembly amend City Charter Section 3.1 relating to the election of the Mayor, City Council members and, by implication, School Board members.
- Approved, unanimously, to introduce an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 30 (Elections) to add a new Section 30-2 pertaining to the timing of elections for the Mayor, City Council members and School Board members, in accordance with legislation enacted by the 2021 Session of the Virginia General Assembly. Further moved to waive the first reading, and to set the public hearing on the proposed ordinance for Nov. 9, 2021.
- Approved, unanimously, to direct city staff to schedule the required public hearing for Nov. 9, 2021, on a proposed resolution requesting the General Assembly amend the City Charter, Section 3.1, pertaining to the election date and terms of office of the Mayor, City Council members, and School Board members.

Students Learn to Communicate with Their Hands

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a class for the professional use of ASL. She sees her students as “future bosses” who could be more inclined to hire deaf workers. She also hopes her ASL students will advocate for the deaf community.

Dr. Phyllis Pajardo, City of Fairfax Schools superintendent, said, “In all of our language courses offered at the Academy — including Korean, Chinese, Arabic, and now ASL — teachers focus not only on the language, but culture as well. Students in Ms. Nesbitt’s classes are learning about deaf culture and how they can become better global citizens.”

The future of ASL in Fairfax Academy is bright. Next year, Nesbitt said the academy will introduce third-level curricula. Nesbitt wants to introduce ASL to eighth graders at Katherine Johnson Middle School to encourage enrollment at the academy. “People see the beauty of the deaf culture,” she said, “and want to learn the language.”

Two Beloved Girl Scout Leaders Honored



Madeline Tankard and Bonnie Johnson

More than 60 people gathered at School Street Park on the morning of Nov. 6 for a tree-planting ceremony to honor longtime Girl Scout volunteers and close friends Madeline Tankard and Bonnie Johnson. Bright sunlight streamed through trees glowing with vibrant reds and yellows, and melting frost glistened on the ground. Mayor David Meyer read proclamations and Colleen Cibula, chief operating officer of the Girl Scouts Nation's Capital Council, and others spoke about the women's remarkable achievements and legacies.

Tankard, who volunteered with the Scouts for 58 years, died in May. She was a talented craftsperson and known for her sewing, quilting, and embroidery skills. Tankard got involved with Girl Scouts when her daughter joined the Brownies in 1963. She held many roles over the years, including troop

leader, camp trainer, and archivist, and she served on the recognition committee. Tankard received the Knox Award, the highest recognition conferred by the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital.

Johnson, 96, retired recently from her role as a Girl Scouts volunteer after 53 years of service. She served as a troop leader and the service unit manager. For last decade or so, she has been active with cookie sales and adult recognitions. Johnson, who led through her actions, was known to jump in and help whenever asked.

"She got me restarted as a troop leader in 1997 at Green Acres," said Cindy Ortega, former manager of the Fairfax City Girl Scouts.

"She influenced countless girls and adult volunteers over the years," said Girl Scouts volunteer Amy Sporkas.

Tankard's daughter, Mary, shared fond memories of her scouting days and expressed deep pride in her mother's accomplishments.

Christopher Fleming, the arborist for the Parks and Recreation Department, helped friends and family mem-

The next
Girl Scouts
cookie sale
begins
Dec. 10.

BEHIND THE BADGE Speed Cameras Installed

New speed enforcement cameras placed near school zones in Fairfax City were activated Nov. 1. The grace period to allow drivers a chance to adjust to the new enforcement method will end Jan. 1, 2022. Drivers photographed exceeding the speed limit after that time will receive a citation.

The cameras were installed along Old Lee Highway, Fairfax Boulevard, and Jermentown Road to protect students who attend the city's four schools, and Woodson High School and Frost Middle School in Fairfax County. Portable cameras are available to enforce reduced speed limits in highway work zones to protect city work crews and contractors working in the right of way.

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bers plant a Sweet Bay Magnolia and a white fringe tree, both native species. The white fringe tree, commonly known as "old man's beard," displays fragrant flowers around Mother's Day. The Girl Scouts plan to plant 5 million trees in the next five years.

Fairfax City's Service Unit 55-6 is home to nearly 200 registered Girl Scouts in about 20 troops. Scouts range in age from 5 to 18.



LIVE LIFE IN THE ARTS

Upcoming programs and performances are listed in the events calendar at fairfaxva.gov.

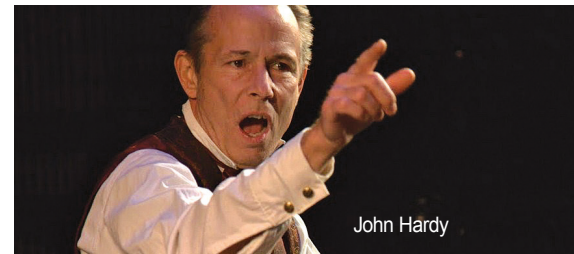


YouTube

Subscribe to see what you're missing! youtube.com/CityofFairfaxVA



Kadencia



John Hardy

Cathedral Brass Home for the Holidays

8 p.m. Dec. 3
at the Sherwood
Community Center

Mason Arts at Old Town Hall

Dewberry School of
Music - Woodwinds
7 p.m. Dec. 8
at Old Town Hall

Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall Performance Series

"La Parranda" Kadencia -
A Puerto Rican Christmas Eve
Celebration!
8 p.m. Dec. 10 at Old Town Hall

A Christmas Carol

2 p.m. Dec. 19 at Old Town Hall
Watch John Hardy perform more than
40 roles in this unique production of
the Dickens classic, *A Christmas Carol*.

Speed Cameras Installed

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New legislation was enacted by the General Assembly in its 2020 session, and signed by the governor, granted limited photo speed enforcement authority to Virginia localities, permitting fines up to \$100, and citations may be issued when a vehicle exceeds the applicable active school zone or active work zone speed limit by at least 10 miles per hour.

On March 9, 2021, following a public hearing, Fairfax City Council adopted an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 98 (Traffic and Vehicles), Article 1.



HELPING HANDS

THE CITY NEEDS PEOPLE LIKE YOU

BOARD AND COMMISSION VACANCIES

Board of Architectural Review (one vacancy for business representative), **Board of Building Code Appeals** (one mechanical or plumbing vacancy), **Board of Equalization** (one vacancy for alternate member), **Commission on the Arts** (one George Mason University representative vacancy), **Community Appearance Committee** (five resident vacancies, one garden club representative), **Environmental Sustainability Committee** (two vacancies), **Regional – Fairfax Alcohol Safety Action Program Policy Board** (one vacancy), **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board** (one vacancy), **Personnel Advisory Board** (one vacancy).

To apply, visit fairfaxva.gov and search "boards and vacancies," or call 703-385-7935.

FAIRFAX CITY

Holiday MARKET

FIRST 2 WEEKENDS OF DECEMBER
OLD TOWN SQUARE
 10415 NORTH STREET

DECEMBER 3 - 5
DECEMBER 10 - 12

FRIDAYS 5 - 8 PM • SATURDAYS 12 - 6 PM • SUNDAYS 12 - 5 PM

GOURMET FOOD
 HOLIDAY DECOR
 JEWELRY
 PET TREATS

**MORE ARTISANS
 THAN EVER!**

WOOD
 PERSONAL CARE
 NEEDLEWORK
 AND MORE!

FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.FAIRFAXVA.GOV/SPECIALEVENTS

Councilmember Jon Stehle Elected Virginia Municipal League President

At the Virginia Municipal League's annual conference on Oct. 6 in Leesburg, Va., league members elected Fairfax City Councilmember Jon Stehle to serve as president. Stehle follows outgoing VML President Willie Greene, mayor of the City of Galax. Stehle's term began Oct. 4.

Established in 1905, VML is a statewide association of city, town, and county governments. The non-partisan, nonprofit league assists local governments through legislative advocacy, research, education, and other services, and represents local governments before the General Assembly in Richmond.

"It's about connection, advocacy, and learning together across our commonwealth," said Stehle.



Newly elected Virginia Municipal League President Jon Stehle (left) accepts the gavel from outgoing VML President Willie Greene, Mayor of the City of Galax.

"I'm excited as VML president to tour the commonwealth and hear lessons learned in other communities, and to share our ideas as well. It's the interplay of information that really matters and could make a difference for our residents."



CURIOUS CITIZENS



How is stormwater management currently funded?

Fairfax City property owners currently support stormwater management through 5.7 cents per \$100 of their real estate tax bill. Three cents are dedicated to the stormwater fund (infrastructure), and an additional 2.7 cents are contributed from the General Fund for operations. These tax contributions fund operations and maintenance costs and projects that help the city reduce flooding and comply with regulations.

All properties in the city generate stormwater runoff, but, at this time, not all properties contribute to the stormwater fund. The city has proposed implementing a stormwater utility fee to ensure all property owners pay for city stormwater services. A public hearing is slated for Dec. 14. Visit engage.fairfaxva.gov to learn more.



NO PERMIT NEEDED FOR SOME SIGNS

Fairfax City residents and businesses no longer need permits for some commonly used sign types. Recently-adopted amendments to the Zoning Ordinance – effective Sept. 1 – simplified processes and clarified some existing sign standards.

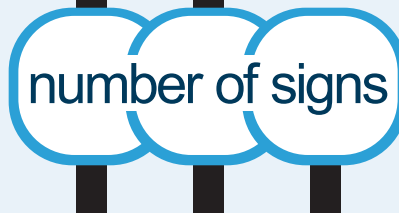
The most noticeable change is that **temporary signs are now allowed without permits**. For residents, this means that yard signs

and similar types of message signs are now allowed and do not require a permit from the city. For businesses, the streamlined process applies to signs such as banners. For both residential and business uses, such signs are now allowed so long as conditions on size, number of signs, and other factors are met. These conditions are summarized below.

RESIDENTIAL MESSAGE SIGNS



Up to 12 square feet of signage per house, and up to 6 square feet per multifamily unit. A typical yard sign measures about 3 square feet, so four standard-sized yard signs per house, or two per multifamily unit, can be displayed without a permit.



No limit on number of signs per housing unit, as long as the cumulative area of all signs meets the size standards above.



For houses, message signs can be located on the lot, on a structure, or in a window. For multifamily units, message signs can be located on a structure or in a window.



duration

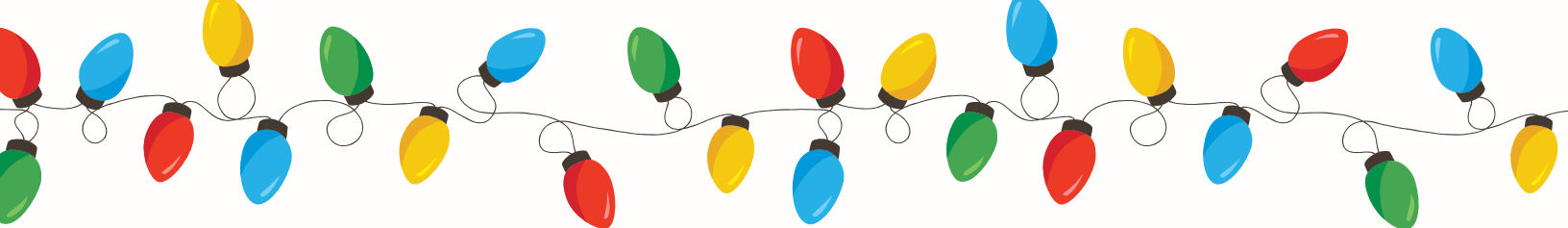
No duration limit for residential message signs allowed without a permit.

HOAs, etc. Any homeowners association, condominium association, or apartment management company may impose more restrictive requirements on message signs than what is permitted by the city's zoning ordinance.

Additional residential message signs are allowed on a permit basis. Permits can be issued individually or to a group for multiple signs citywide. This allows houses to display an extra 24 square feet of message signage for a period of 30 consecutive days, and no more

than 90 days per year.

Other improvements have been made to the city's sign regulations as well. Detailed information can be found at fairfaxva.gov (search "zoning text"). Contact the Zoning Division at zoning@fairfaxva.gov or 703-385-7820.



Safety for the Season: Be Ready and Stay Ready!

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to gather, but the risk of fire grows by 51 percent during this festive season. Here are a few tips to reduce the potential for fire in your home during the holiday season.

- Keep candles away from anything that can burn, and always remember to blow them out before bedtime.
- Inspect strands of lights for bare or frayed wires, broken bulbs, or bad connections. Read manufacturers' instructions for the number of strands to connect.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles, hot ovens, and cooking surfaces.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. After use, wet the smoking material to prevent heat buildup.
- If you're using electrical cords, be sure to not overload the outlet.
- Make sure your tree doesn't block an exit.
- Make sure your tree is at least 3 feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents, and lights.
- When using a live Christmas tree, remember to water the tree daily.
- Never use lit candles on a holiday tree or wreath, or with any vegetation.
- Always turn off the lights, both exterior and interior, before leaving or going to bed.



FIREFIGHTER JOSH

HISTORIC RESOURCES EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



Gift Shops Offer Distinctive Items, Special Shopping Day

Shop at the Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center and Historic Blenheim gift shops, which specialize in Fairfax- and Virginia-centric items. From 2-4 p.m. Dec 12, the museum gift shop will feature special holiday music for shopping limited-edition vintage totes, unique history books, and more. Gift certificates are available. Info: fairfaxva.gov/visitors, 703-385-8414

Christmas in Camp and Making Do at Home

Noon to 4 p.m. Dec. 5

Travel back in time at Historic Blenheim to learn how Civil War soldiers and the folks back home celebrated Christmas. Drill with soldiers in camp and join their cease-fire gift exchange. Tour

Blenheim, and watch the recorded living history program *In Their Words: A Civil War Christmas*. Check out the schedule, and sign up for activities when you arrive. (Reservations needed for groups of four or more.) Info: fairfaxva.gov, search "Christmas in Camp"

LUNCH WITH Santa

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11
OLD TOWN HALL, 3999 UNIVERSITY DRIVE

SEATING TIMES:
11AM, 12P, 1PM

AGES: 10 YRS & UNDER

FEE: \$8 PER CHILD

REGISTER:
FAIRFAXVA.GOV/SPECIALEVENTS



FAIRFAX CITY
Parks & Recreation

FAIR CITY MALL



Mayor David L. Meyer (david.meyer@fairfaxva.gov)

City Council

Joseph D. Harmon (joseph.harmon@fairfaxva.gov)

So P. Lim (so.lim@fairfaxva.gov)

Janice B. Miller (janice.miller@fairfaxva.gov)

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contact us
WeCare@fairfaxva.gov

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Nominations Sought for 2022 Women of Influence Award

Fairfax City benefits from the many intelligent, talented, dedicated women who live and work in the city. Now it's time to honor them. The City of Fairfax Commission for Women seeks nominations for its Women of Influence Award, which acknowledges and celebrates these community leaders. The nomination period begins Jan. 1, 2022, and runs through Feb. 11.

CFW Chairwoman Patricia Addison says the commission is looking for women who live in the City of Fairfax, are leaders who positively impact the lives of city residents, and who model what it means to *Live Life Connected*.

This is your opportunity to recognize and celebrate the outstanding women who are making a significant impact on the lives of city residents.

Eligibility Requirements

- The nominee must be a resident of the City of Fairfax.
- The work for which the nominee is being nominated must benefit city residents.

- Elected officials and candidates for office are not eligible.
 - You may nominate a group of two or more women for an award.
 - You may nominate only one person/group per form; complete a separate form to submit a nomination for an additional person or group.
- Please submit nominations online at fairfaxva.gov (search "Women of Influence"). An awards ceremony and reception will be held in March 2022 during Women's History Month at a City Council meeting (date to be determined).

Past recipients of the Women of Influence Award include Fairfax High School gymnastics coach Susan Barborek (2020), former Planning Commission chair Janet Jaworski (2020), and former City Councilmember Jennifer Passey (2021).

For more information or to request a paper nomination, email Lesley.Abashian@fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7894.